

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Kennedy fans lash back at Patrick J. Buchanan

Patrick J. Buchanan, giddy from the narcotic effect of another Republican presidential victory, has stepped over the line with a bilious and mean-spirited "essay" on John F. Kennedy ("The JFK the myth-makers inevitably pass over," Op-Ed, Nov. 23). It is a true measure of Buchanan's despicable, demagogic nature that he would choose the anniversary of Kennedy's assassination to publish a muck-raking revisionist account of JFK's brief presidential career.

Buchanan's column is so vulgar and false that it can't hide its true purpose: to demean our memory of Kennedy while inflating our perception of Ronald Reagan. Well, Reagan is a boob, and I say it now while the man is alive, not, like Buchanan, 25 years after a man gave his life in service to his country.

Recently, a German politician resigned after speaking apologetically of Germany's "infatuation" with Hitler on the anniversary of Kristallnacht. The bad timing offended his countrymen and many others throughout the world. Buchanan, having similarly offended the memory of Kennedy, should smash his typewriter and, like his peer in Germany, consign himself to oblivion.

Barring that, the Herald Examiner should have the good taste to drop Buchanan's column and replace it with something worthwhile — a brightly colored weather map would be a better use of space.

KEVIN ROONEY
Los Angeles

Just a note of thanks to Pat Buchanan for taking the time to trash one of the country's most revered heroes on the anniversary of his death. You have to wonder what kind of person — especially when he considers himself a "super patriot" — would do something like this. Our country and its people are entitled to dream and remember things as we believe them to be. I can't imagine why Buchanan tries so hard to dispel such emotions, but I do know this: Pat, we know JFK, he was a friend of ours. And, Pat, ... you know the rest.

K.T. GOLD
Encinitas

Some people resent a hero of any sort, always anxious to point out errors. Kennedy was inspirational to many of us, made us think each of us could make a difference. No

president since has had the same effect. Not many of us have that quality, but writing a column such as as Patrick Buchanan's is just a case of sour grapes. "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

MRS. BETTY FORTNEY
La Mirada

Patrick J. Buchanan trotted out the same old hoary conservative backwash that was a staple in Joe McCarthy's era. The Bay of Pigs? That was Dwight D. Eisenhower's idea to begin with. Berlin Wall? Go to war over that? Silly boy! As for the removal of missiles from Turkey, that decision had been made some time before, in light of the increased range of the Minuteman and the danger of invasion of Turkey. On the pledge not to invade Cuba, so what? Too expensive in manpower and money.

As for Vietnam, Richard Nixon, Buchanan's old buddy and drinking partner, sold us down the river on that one with his "peace with honor." On Civil Rights, the only time presidents get moving on that issue is when there's enough yelling on the subject. Politics? Of course! But no less noble. Womanizing and pot smoking? Read a biography of Ben Franklin, who engaged in many dalliances and in opium smoking. Does that make him any less great? The wiretaps on Martin Luther King Jr. were at the behest of Buchanan's hero, former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover. Harassment of Jimmy Hoffa? Anything done to that scumsucker was well-deserved. Operation Mongoose was applauded by conservatives, but because it failed, Kennedy was vilified.

Finally, on the South Vietnamese premier Ngo Dinh Diem. If you have any sense of history, he had to go, no doubt about that. We all have myths about our presidents. Some say Nixon was hounded from office, Gerald Ford was competent, Ronald Reagan was alert and decisive, George Bush was born with a brain. It depends on your perception, I guess. Buchanan's twisted view is the norm for Republicans.

RICHARD GOAD
Oxnard

I'm approaching the age of 70 and have lived through some of America's worst years, including one of the weirdest presidential elections in history featuring two of the worst candidates — not to mention the last eight years, which will live in infamy.

It was, therefore, certainly enlightening and a lift to watch the scenes from the Kennedy years on television last week. He was one of our truly great presidents. Though he only served a few short years, he was a man the

whole world recognized as a force and an inspiration. He certainly made me feel proud to have been part of the chance to bring America back to greatness by casting a vote for him, and for American idealism.

If only he could have lived, he would have been re-elected by a landslide, and America would have been so great.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy did what no other president could do: He brought the whole world together.